

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Canceled)
2. (Currently Amended) ~~The image~~ An image compression and decompression apparatus according to claim 1, comprising:
an identification section that identifies given color image information and outputs an identification signal;
a conversion section that converts said color image information to color image information with a specified length in units of blocks;
a characteristics correction section that corrects block-based color image information converted in said conversion section with respect to characteristics thereof in units of said blocks based on the identification signal output from said identification section;
an image compression section that compresses the image corrected in said characteristics correction section in units of said blocks and stores the compressed image in a storage area; and
a decompression section that decompresses the compressed image stored in said storage area in units of said blocks,
wherein said characteristics correction section corrects an average value of three RGB signals and each of RGB outputs to a value resulting in a black character based on a compression unit according to a black character identification signal from said identification section.

3. (Withdrawn) An image compression and decompression apparatus comprising:

an identification section which identifies given color image information and outputs an identification signal;

a characteristics correction compression section which corrects characteristics of color image information during compression of said color image information and stores the corrected and compressed color image information in a storage area; and

a decompression section which decompresses a corrected and compressed color image stored in said storage area.

4. (Withdrawn) The image compression and decompression apparatus according to claim 3, wherein the characteristics correction compression section at least comprises a brightness/color-difference conversion section which converts RGB image signals as color image information received from said identification section to a brightness/color-difference signal, an error diffusion section which applies error diffusion to this brightness/color-difference signal, and a characteristics correction section which corrects characteristics of said color image information by using an output from said error diffusion section and an identification result of said identification section.

5. (Withdrawn) An image compression and decompression apparatus comprising:

an identification section which identifies given color image information and outputs an identification signal;

a conversion section which converts said color image information to color image information with a specified length in units of blocks;

an image compression section which compresses said color image information converted in said conversion section in units of said blocks and stores the compressed color image information in a storage area;

a decompression section which decompresses a compressed image stored in said storage area in units of said blocks; and

a characteristics correction section which corrects characteristics of color image information decompressed in said decompression section based on an identification signal output from said identification section.

6. (Withdrawn) The image compression and decompression apparatus according to claim 5, wherein said identification section outputs an identification signal from said color image information by identifying not only a black character, but also black and color characters, and said characteristics correction section corrects color image information decompressed in said decompression section with respect to chroma based on an identification signal identified as black and color characters.

7. (Withdrawn) An image compression and decompression apparatus comprising:

- an identification section which identifies given color image information and outputs an identification signal;
- a compression mode setting section which sets compression mode as a compression method for at least one of said color image information and said identification signal from said identification section;
- a compression section which compresses at least one of said color image information and said identification signal for storage in a storage area according to compression mode specified by said compression mode setting section; and
- a decompression section which decompresses at least one of said color image information compressed in said compression section and said identification signal according to said compression mode specified in said compression mode setting section.

8. (Withdrawn) The image compression and decompression apparatus according to claim 7, wherein the compression section comprises an image compression section having a selector which selects identification signals output from the identification section according to a mode table based on said compression mode supplied from said compression mode setting section and having an image compression circuit which compresses color image information according to a signal output therefrom, and an identification compression section having a selector which selectively outputs an identification signal output from the identification section according to a mode table based on said compression mode and a compression identification signal compressed in an identification compression circuit.

9. (Withdrawn) The image compression and decompression apparatus according to claim 7, wherein the compression mode setting section comprises at least a mode not using an identification signal output from said identification section, a mode using an identification signal, and a mode using an identification signal by compressing and decompressing the same.

10. (Withdrawn) An image compression and decompression apparatus comprising:

- a brightness/color-difference conversion section which converts RGB image information as given color image information to brightness and color difference and outputs a brightness/color-difference signal;
- an identification section which determines whether complementary color relationship is contained in said brightness/color-difference signal output from said brightness/color-difference conversion section;
- an image compression section which compresses said color image information and stores the same in a storage area when said identification section determines that no complementary color relationship is included and which compresses said color image information through a different method or processes the same differently and stores the same in a storage area when it is determined that complementary color relationship is included; and
- an image decompression section which decompresses compressed color image information stored in said storage area.

11. (Canceled)

12. (Currently Amended) ~~The image~~ An image compression and decompression method according to claim 11, comprising:

an identification step for identifying given color image information and outputting an identification signal;

a conversion step for converting said color image information to block-based color image information having a specified length;

a characteristics correction for correcting block-based color image information converted at said conversion step with respect to characteristics thereof in units of said blocks based on the identification signal output from said identification step;

an image compression step for compressing an image corrected at said characteristics correction step in units of said blocks and storing the same in a storage area; and

a decompression step for decompressing the compressed image stored in said storage area in units of said blocks,

wherein said characteristics correction step corrects an average value of three RGB signals and each of RGB outputs to a value resulting in a black character according to a black character identification signal from said identification section.

13. (Withdrawn) An image compression and decompression method comprising:
an identification step for identifying given color image information and outputting an identification signal;

a characteristics correction compression step for correcting characteristics of color image information during compression of said color image information and storing the corrected and compressed color image information in a storage area; and

a decompression step for decompressing a corrected and compressed color image stored in said storage area.

14. (Withdrawn) The image compression and decompression method according to claim 13, wherein the characteristics correction compression step comprises at least a brightness/color-difference conversion step for converting RGB image signals as color image information received from said identification step to a brightness/color-difference signal, an error diffusion step for applying error diffusion to this brightness/color-difference signal, and a characteristics correction step for correcting characteristics of said color image information by using an output from said error diffusion step and an identification result of said identification step.

15. (Withdrawn) An image compression and decompression method comprising:
an identification step for identifying a black character from given color image information and outputting an identification signal;
a conversion step for converting said color image information to color image information with a specified length in units of blocks;
an image compression step for compressing said color image information converted in said conversion step in units of said blocks and storing the compressed color image information in a storage area;
a decompression step for decompressing a compressed image stored in said storage area in units of said blocks; and
a characteristics correction step for correcting characteristics of color image information decompressed in said decompression step based on an identification signal output from said identification step.

16. (Withdrawn) The image compression and decompression method according to claim 15, wherein said identification step outputs an identification signal from said color image information by identifying not only a black character, but also black and color characters, and said characteristics correction step corrects color image information decompressed in said decompression step with respect to chroma based on an identification signal identified as black and color characters.

17. (Withdrawn) An image compression and decompression method comprising:
an identification step for identifying given color image information and outputting an
identification signal;
a compression mode setting step for setting compression mode as a compression
method for at least one of said color image information and said identification
signal from said identification step;
a compression step for compressing at least one of said color image information and
said identification signal for storage in a storage area according to
compression mode specified by said compression mode setting step; and
a decompression step for decompressing at least one of said color image information
compressed in said compression step and said identification signal according
to said compression mode specified in said compression mode setting step.

18. (Withdrawn) The image compression and decompression method according
to claim 17, wherein the compression step comprises an image compression step using a
selector for selecting identification signals output from the identification step according to a
mode table based on said compression mode supplied from said compression mode setting
step and having an image compression circuit for compressing color image information
according to a signal output therefrom, and an identification compression step using a
selector for selectively outputting an identification signal output from the identification step
according to a mode table based on said compression mode and a compression identification
signal compressed in an identification compression circuit.

19. (Withdrawn) The image compression and decompression method according
to claim 17, wherein the compression mode setting step comprises at least a mode not using
an identification signal output from said identification step, a mode using an identification
signal, and a mode using an identification signal by compressing and decompressing the
same.

20. (Withdrawn) An image compression and decompression method comprising:
a brightness/color-difference conversion step for converting RGB image information
as given color image information to brightness and color difference and
outputting a brightness/color-difference signal;
an identification step for determining whether complementary color relationship is
contained in said brightness/color-difference signal output from said
brightness/color-difference conversion step;
an image compression step for compressing said color image information and storing
the same in a storage area when said identification step determines that no
complementary color relationship is included and for compressing said color
image information through a different method or processing the same
differently and storing the same in a storage area when it is determined that
complementary color relationship is included; and
an image decompression step for decompressing compressed color image information
stored in said storage area.